Dec 1976

The MESSENGER

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

ST. STEPHEN'S & Milnrow Littleborough

Price: 4p

ST. STEPHEN'S DIARY

DECEMBER

Weds. 1	Young Mums at 2 p.m. and every week
	Whist Drive 7.30 p.m. and every week
	Junior Church Staff Meeting - 7.30 p.m.
Fri. 3	Youth Club at 7 p.m. and every week
Sat. 4	Family Dance - 7 to 11 p.m.
Sun. 5	Toy Service - 11 a.m. - Rev.A. Nash
	Also Thanksgiving Service for Church Decoration.
	Evening Communion - 6 p.m. -Rev.A.Nash
Mon. 6	Pilots - 6.30 p.m. and every week
Tues. 7	Ladies Guild Party - 7.30 p.m.
Thurs.9	United Prayer Meeting - 7.30 p.m.
Sun. 12	Family Service - 11 a.m. - Mrs.M.Nash
	Evening Service - 6 p.m. - Mrs.M. Carniha: of Oldham
Sun. 19	Rev. A. Nash will conduct services at 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Tues. 21	Carol singing round the district from 6.30 p.m.
Fri. 24	Candlelight Service - 11.30 p.m. - Rev.A. Nash
Sat. 25	CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE - 11 a.m. - Rev.A. Nash
Sun. 26	Carol Service for the Family - 11 a.m. (No Evening Service)
1977	
Jan. 2	Lay Preachers at 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.

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FLOWER ROTA

Dec. 5	Mrs.J.Calow	Mrs. Clowes	
" 12	Mrs.L. Prince	Mrs.M. Wood	
" 19	Mrs. Buckley	Mrs. Duffy	Mrs. Whittaker
" 26	Mrs.E. Garside	Mrs. I. Collins	

LITTLEBOROUGH DIARY

DECEMBER

Sun. 5th.	Mr. J. Lord - 10.30 a.m.
Weds. 8th.	Pilots - 6.45 and every week
Sat. 11th.	Primary Party - 2.30 p.m.
	Junior Church - 4.30 p.m.
Sun. 12th.	Toy Service - 10.30 a.m. -Rev. A. Nash
	Missionary Boxes will be received during this service.
	Communion Service - 6 p.m. -Rev. A. Nash.
Sun. 19th.	Mrs. M. Nash - 10-30 a.m.
	CAROL SERVICE
Tues. 21st.	Ladies Guild Party - 7-15 p.m.
Sat. 25th.	CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE -10 a.m.
Sun. 26th.	Rev. A. Nash - 10-30 a.m.
	Family Communion

1977.

Sun. 2nd.	Mr. J. Lord - 10-30 a.m.
Mon. 3rd.	Visit to Pantomime - leaving Church at 1.30 p.m. prompt.

NB. -- Fellowship Hour will be held after Service on the evening of December 12th.
A House Meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. A. Stott, 94, Harehill Road on Tuesday 14th December from 7 p.m. You are invited to come along.

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ORGANIST/PIANIST.

Dec. 5.	Mrs. M. Hill	a.m.
" 12.	Miss L. Merrick	a.m.
	Mrs. M. Hill	p.m.
" 19.	Mrs. E. Cococroft	a.m.
" 25.	Mrs. M. Hill	a.m.
" 26.	Mrs. E. Cockcroft	a.m.

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Mr. & Mrs. D. Harrison have kindly agreed to accept the Toys at the Toy Service on Sunday December 12th.

From .. The Manse
December, 1976.

My Dear Friends,

Soon we shall have Christmas here again and as the year gropes through its shortest days and longest nights, and fog and frost abound, so festive lights will spring up in almost every home and illuminated Christmas trees esconced in many windows shine out cheerfulness into the wintry evenings. The festivities of Christmas will have begun. Of course there are many preparations that have to be made, parties to be arranged, presents to be bought and parcelled up ready to be given. Then when the time comes there will be music and dancing and eating and drinking and the dark days of the year will resound with merriment and singing. What a change will have come over everything!

Soon we shall have Christmas gone again and somehow the New Year always looks black and drab after the cheerful change that Christmas brought. "What a pity Christmas doesn't last for always" a child said to me; a sentiment not shared by many an adult whose feeling is instead, "I'm glad that Christmas is only temporary". But if we really take the trouble to get to grips with the heart of Christmas, with the reality of it rather than its superficial aspects, then we shall, I am sure, want Christmas to continue all the time.

God offers us the gift of Christ. Without accepting that gift there is no real cause for celebrating Christmas. It becomes simply an occasion for having a good time and no different from any other excuse to have a good time. But if we accept God's gift of Christ it means change of a permanent kind.

So let us reflect upon the reality of Christmas, the truth seen through all the transparent seasonal frills. Then we can truly celebrate.

May God bless you all at this Christmastide.

Your sincere friend,

 ALFRED NASH.

Thought for the Month:-

"Christ in you, the hope of glory" -
Paul wrote - Colossians Chapter 1, Verse 27.

Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem is born
If he's not born in thee
Thy soul is still forlorn.

He was born in a manger, in another man's stable.
When He died, He was buried in another man's grave.
Yet, though he never wrote a book, all the libraries in the world could hardly hold the books that have been written about him.
Though he never founded a college, his teachings have influenced more students than all the schools put together.
Though He never commanded an army, no leader ever had more volunteers or won more victories.
Though He was never wealthy, He has given riches beyond compare to millions the world over.

Hail thou every blessed morn!
Hail redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem".

OBITUARY

May we offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mrs. Edith Annie Galvin of 86 Newhey Road, Milnrow, who passed away on Tuesday, 2nd November, aged 77 years.
Funeral services in the home and at Oldham Crematorium were conducted by Rev. J. Nash.

"God bless and thank you"

It is always a hard thing to have to say "goodbye" to Christian friends and never more so than where Mrs. Annie Prestwich and her daughter Mrs. Joan Kay are concerned. Annie and Joan have been at St. Stephen's since they could first remember and the work they have done quietly and faithfully is beyond all telling. Our sincere thanks to both.

We pray that they and their husbands, Harold and Jack will be greatly blessed in their new home at Morecambe. Hope to see them all in the not-too-distant future. God bless!

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Ladies Guild

"Memories are made of" .... a talk given last month by Mrs. M. Nash proved to be most interesting, the memories ranging from childhood days to the numerous places she has moved to and lived in with her husband. To memories of many people - old and young, ruffians and otherwise - met along the way. The talk has had to remain unfinished - as time had flown away - it is to be hoped a further instalment may be had one day in the not too far distant.

Among the memories recalled were - Family Church Camps at seaside and in the country .. Clubs for child .. old folks .. Ladies meetings of various kinds .. Christian Endeavour .. Church Choirs .. Concerts .. Junior Church or Sunday School whichever applied at the time .. Easter Missions .. Outings .. much happiness .. sadness because of others distress and sufferings .. much sharing .. and over and above all the constant knowledge of the presence of and guidance of God the F

This month we are looking forward to our Christmas Party on the 7th December. This is always a happy occasion enhanced somewhat by a visit from Father Chri

A varied programme has been arranged by the Commit for 1977, the first meeting of which is on 4th January.

A tribute here to Mrs. Joan Kay for all she has do during her time as Secretary, we shall miss you Joan. welcome to our new Secretary, Mrs. Brenda Clarent, to we pledge our allegiance.

LITTLEBOROUGH NEWS.

FABULOUS CUT AT AUTUMN FAIR

The Autumn Fair got off to an "electrifying" start, with an unscheduled "lights out" when the power failed. This set back, caused only a short delay however, and the Fair was soon underway after a short service by Rev. A. Nash.

The soloist was Mr. P. Walker, who sang two beautiful songs and the Fair was declared open by our own Susan Butterworth, who is the reigning Rochdale Junior Carnival Queen. The Mayor of Rochdale, Councillor J.L. Albiston took the Chair, and he was accompanied by the Mayoress.

It proved to be a busy, bustling afternoon with a great deal of hard work being undertaken. The members of the Young People's Stall have asked us to thank all those who helped them to sell enough Christmas Cards and Gifts to realise over £100 profit, and similar expressions of gratitude have come from the Ladies of the Tea Room, the Men's Stall, the Tombola, the Drapery Stall, and the Pound/Refreshment Stall. No doubt there are others who would add to this for a lot of people clearly gave of their best. Thank you everyone.

At the end of the day, as tired helpers dragged themselves off home, others got down to the task of counting the proceeds, not a simple chore, but the latest news is that the figure raised in total exceeds £500.

Incidentally, Mr. Gordan Heap won the Tea Room raffle with 191 Pink.

HOW TO CHEER UP

Spread a little kindness,
Plan a little plot,
Make a bit of sunshine,
In some gloomy spot.
That's the way to cheer up,
Folk who are feeling sad, Odd that it will also
Make your own heart glad.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

SUNDAY - 19th December - 6 p.m.
Presentation of "THE LIGHT"

FRIDAY - 24th December - Midnight Service.
From 11.30 p.m. - 12.15 a.m.

SATURDAY - 25th December - 11 a.m.
CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE
"O COME LET US ADORE HIM"

SUNDAY - 26th December - 11 a.m.
Carol Service

CHRISTMAS

As a character in one of Charles Dickens' best-loved books remarks:

"I have always thought of Christmas as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of in the long calendar of the year when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that Christmas has done me good and will do me good - and I say "God Bless It".

YOUTH CLUB

The Friday night Youth Club recently started at St. Stephens is flourishing. Weekly sessions are catering for 20-30 young people who make a frightful noise but behave very well and have a lot of fun.

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PANTO VISIT - DECEMBER 30th - to Middleton Civic Hall -- Please be at the Church ready to board the bus at 1.15 p.m. Don't be late!

"OF AVOIDING RASH JUDGEMENT"

From "The Imitation of Christ"

"Turn thine eyes unto thyself and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth and easily sinneth; but in judging and examining himself, he always laboureth fruitfully.

"We often judge of things according as we fancy them; for private affection bereaves us easily of a right judgement.

"If God were always the pure object of our desire, we should not be so easily troubled, through the repugnance of our carnal mind.

"But oftentimes something lurketh within or else occurreth from without, which draweth us after it.

"Many secretly seek themselves in what they do and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things happen otherwise than they desire, they are straightway moved and much vexed.

"The diversities of judgements and opinions cause oftentimes dissensions between friends and countrymen, between religious and devout persons.

"An old custom is hardly broken and no man is willing to be led further than himself can see. If thou doest rely more upon thine own reason or industry than upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated; for God will have us perfectly subject unto Him, that, being inflamed with His love, we may transcend the narrow limits of human reason".

St. Thomas á Kempis
15th Century.

MUMS WORDS

The Young Mums are still meeting regularly, each Wednesday afternoon, and enjoying great fellowship together. Every Mum is welcome and by all means bring your little ones as they have a jolly time in the creche with four or five "Aunties" to keep an eye on things.

In November we were fortunate to have two speakers; Mrs. P. Royle who demonstrated various ways of rotting teeth with the aid of home-made sweets, and Mrs. J. Proctor who spoke about "nutrition" with lots of information and advice. No-one can accuse the Young Mums of not looking at both sides of a question.

Many thanks are extended to all those who helped us to bring in the sum of £38.14 towards the "Uncommon Market" total. The sume came from various sources;

Christmas Decorations	£23.42
Mystery Parcels	12.00
Sweets in a Jar	2.72

One of our members, Mrs. Brenda Ogden, has moved to Oldham. We send our condolences to Bre[illegible] and hope she pops in to see us whenever she returns to civilisations. (Before we get any irate letters from the Beautiful Oldham Society, let it be said that the foregoing fatuous remark came from one who was an Oldhamer - until he escaped).

Let it be known that the Mums will not be hibernating this winter. In between a lot of dashing round the shops and visiting sundry relations, as one does at this time of the year, we have a busy programme on our Wednesday sessions. On 1st Dec. we will have a quiz (if you pass, you fail). On 8th Dec. we will sing carols to get us in tune for the following week, 15th December, when we have our Annual Carol Service and Party.

The Service will be held in the Church and the children will be dressed as shepherds, angels, wise men and of course, Mary and Joseph.

After Christmas, meetings will resume on 5th January, 1977.

UNOBSERVED GHOSTS

The Halloween Social and Fancy Dress Party was a huge success again. There was no shortage of witches about, to say nothing of sundry black cats, skeletons (no doubt out of the family cupboard), ghosts and some rather batty bats etc. Only the scoop spook was missing as the "Rochdale Observer" failed to send along the promised photographer, but there is no knowing what spirits might have detained him that night.

As if there weren't enough creepy things about, the evening began with a Beetle Drive, and after the fancy dress parade, everyone adjourned to the "Garden" where there was a firework display to terrify those who had not so far been terrified.

Finally, everyone came inside again to warm up with the help of liberal helpings of Baked Potatoes, Hot Dogs (more animals?), and Parkin. Altogether it was a jolly evening which raised £19 and gave a lot of people a lot of fun. Thanks to all the organisers and helpers.

I WILL TRY

To help another on life's way,
To smile and chase a frown away,
To right a fault, reveal the good,
To love my neighbour as I should,
To comfort someone who is sad,
To make a lonely person glad,
To share my joys and blessings too,
This will I try each day to do.

MONEY TO GIVE AWAY

The Ladies Guild are pleased to announce that the proceeds from the Jumble Sale held in October amounted to £31 and they have decided to donate £70 from the funds to the Autumn Fair effort.

The Christmas Party will be held on 21st December at 7.30 p.m. and it is hoped that there will be a full turnout for this event. If you wish to attend please give your name to Mrs. A. Stott as soon as possible, if not sooner.

SEVEN SET SAIL

On Sunday, 14th November, seven new pilots were enrolled during morning service, they were:-
Lesley Mullen, Jayne Clegg, Peter Law,
John Vincent, Joanne Freeman, Jill Hobbs and
Gillian Armitage.
In addition, three Junior Officers were commissioned:-
Janet Leach, Dena Silcock and Mark Grindrod.

We welcome the new Pilots, and hope they will make the most of their careers as Pilots, and we hope that for the Junior Officers this will be only the beginning of a long period of service in the world wide church of Jesus Christ.

THE CHRISTENING

We are having a Christening on Sunday at four,
We know the procedure - we've had many more!
Grannies and Grandads and Godparents kind,
Will gather together with one thought in mind,
That a dear little infant as pure as a dove,
Shall be given to Jesus to keep in his love.

A snow-white Christening gown, downy with lace,
Will sweeten the look of her fair little face,
And when round the font we are gathered in prayer,
The Minister holding her, with gentle care,
Will sprinkle her forehead with water divine,
This sweet little bundle of joy that is mine.

(Submitted by Mrs. Stott)

Jesus said: "I will make you fishers of men".
"Ever let your hook be hanging. Where you least believe it, there is a fish in the stream". Ovid -- 43 BC - 18 AD.

SOME CHRISTMAS PLANS

FIRST OF ALL, to put you in a giddy and giving mood, on Saturday 11th December, there will be the annual, incredible, unforgetable,

SUNDAY SCHOOL PARTIES:

Primary at 2.30
Big-noisy kids at 4.30.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, spare a thought and take some action for those children, who, for one reason or another, might not have much of a Christmas this year:

Mr. and Mrs. D. Harrison will receive toys at the TOY SERVICE on the morning of 12th December. Please search out those good but unwanted toys you are lucky enough to have.

(Incidently, on the same day, can you bring in your Missionary Boxes).

JOIN US AT A JOYOUS

CAROL SERVICE

ON

SUNDAY, 19th DECEMBER

when items of Christmas music will be provided by the children of the Primary Department. Words, music and artistic work will be presented by the Pilots.

AND WORSHIP WITH US ON

CHRISTMAS MORNING - 10 a.m.

AND WHEN IT IS ALL OVER, you may be one of the lucky ones who can look forward to the visit to the PANTOMIME on Monday, 3rd January, Next Year. Resolve to be promptly at the Church for 1.30 p.m.

CHURCH DUTIES - LITTLEBOROUGH

DOOR STEWARDS

Dec. 5.	Mrs. K. Mills	Mrs. P. Lightfoot
" 12. am.	Mr. R. Mullen	Mr. D. Armitage
" pm.	Mr. T. Fielden	Mr. E. Holt
" 19	Mrs. Marvelley	Miss W. Law
" 26	Mr. J. Hill	Mr. G. Simpson
1977.		
Jan. 2	Mrs. E. Dunwell	Miss J. Leach

COMMUNION - ELDERS

Dec. 12	pm.	Mr. J. Lord	Mr. F. Simpson
" 26	am.	Mr. J. Lord	Mr. F. Simpson

FLOWERS FOR THE COMMUNION TABLE.

Dec. 5.	Mrs. J. A. Leach
" 12.	Mrs. Binns
" 19.	Mrs. Ingram
" 26.	Mrs. H. Vincent
1977.	
Jan. 2.	Mrs. Hill

COFFEE ROTA

Dec. 5.	Mrs. B. Macormack	Mrs. A. Merrick
" 12.	Mrs. J. Law	Miss W. Law
" 19.	Mrs. J. Hey	Mrs. L. Stanton
" 26.	Mrs. W. Spinks	Mrs. J. Hobbs
1977.		
Jan. 2.	Mrs. L. Butterworth	Mrs. P. Mullen

FAMILY READINGS.

Dec. 5.	Mrs. E. Dunwell -	John 13:1-17
" 12.	Mrs. A. Stott -	Isaiah 40: 1-2 & 9-11.
" 19.	Mrs. M. G. Hill -	Luke 2 : 1-7
" 26.	Mr. R. Mullen -	John 1: 1-18
1977.		
Jan. 2.	Mr. D. Harrison -	Luke 2: 41-52

CHURCH DUTIES - MILNROW

Family Church Door Stewards

Dec. 5	Mr.A. Rae	Mr.G. Buckley
" 12	Mrs.F.Butterworth	Mr.H. Mellor
" 19	Mrs.J. Duffy	Mrs.A. Baines
" 26	Mrs.B.Clarence	Mrs.P.Royle
Jan. 2	Mrs.M.Holden	Kenneth Holden

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ELDERS ROTA

Evening	Door Stewards	Duty Elder	Evening Organist
Dec. 5.	Mr.A.Busill	Mr.J.Wild	Mr.D. Logan
" 12.	Mr.H.Whitehead	Mr.A.Busill	Mrs.C.Hey
" 19.	Mr.J.Wild	Mr.D.Munday	Mrs. Starkie
" 26.	-----	Mr.A. Sharples	----
Jan. 2.	Mrs.Howarth	Mr.B.Clough	Mr.D. Logan

COMMUNION ELDERS

Dec. 5.	Mr.J.Wild	Mr.H.Whitehead
Jan. 2.	Mr.B. Clough	Mr.A.Sharples

Family Church Coffee Rota

Dec. 5.	Mrs. A. Wood	
" 12.	Mrs.J. Calow	Mrs.E. Garside
" 19.	Mrs.J. Munday	Mrs.M. Ogden
Jan. 2.	Mrs.E. Smith	Mrs. H. Buckley

If unable to fulfil your duties please find a suitable substitute. Thank you!

FAMILY CHURCH READERS

Dec. 5.	Mrs.C.Rothwell	- John 13:1-17
" 12.	Mrs.Clarence	- Isaiah 40:1-2 & 9-11
" 19.	Kenneth Holden	- Luke 2: 1-7
" 26.	Mrs.J.Munday	- John 1:1-18
Jan. 2.	Mrs.P.Royle	- Luke 2: 41-52

MINISTER:

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The Manse
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Milnrow

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